

**Town Administrator Report
September 12, 2023**

MCPPO designation training

Sue Fayne and I are planning to go through the Inspector General's Massachusetts Certified Public Purchasing Official (MCPPO) training in the coming months.

FY25 budget worksheets distributed

FY25 budget worksheets were distributed yesterday to departments. They are due back on Monday, October 2. Each department has been asked to submit two versions of their budget, one level-funded and one level-service budget.

Financial forecast FY25-FY28 narrative

An updated financial forecast has been posted to the website and was shared at the first School-Town Budget Working Group meeting last week. It includes year-over-year comparative data, and an analysis of spending and revenue with a group of comparable communities. This version is still carrying roughly a \$400,000 deficit, including 6% increase from the Groton Dunstable Regional School District. Based on information recently provided to the Town, the forecast should be updated and, as we collect more definitive information, we'll continually update this document as the budget process progresses.

Capital Improvement Plan – FY24-FY28

A Capital Improvement Plan has also recently been posted to the website and includes projects that were either submitted formally or discussed at a meeting of all departments a couple of months ago. As we move forward, we'll, of course, be working with the Capital Planning Committee to vet projects and make recommendations.

Bandstand Invitation for Bids

The IFB for the renovation of the bandstand is posted and is being advertised on COMMBUYS, in the Central Register, and the Groton Herald, etc. Responses to the IFB are due Monday, October 2. This project is being funded through state funding secured through a budget earmark. The project includes: replacing the cedar shake shingle roof and crown molding; replacing floorboards as-needed, not to exceed 6 floorboards in total; replacing horizontal tread boards of stairs and railings on both sides of stairs; replacing wood skirting base with azek skirt board or material equal to azek; and scraping and painting the structure with matching colors and paint.

IT updates

The first of the Town's IT updates are planned for Friday, September 22 and will include moving Town Hall computers to Microsoft 365. This is being paid for through ARPA funds.

Town Administrator Open Office Hours

We are working to schedule open office hours at the end of the month. More information should be available and will be advertised and promoted soon. This was part of the goals/objectives document presented to the Board at the beginning of the fiscal year.

Storm Response

Thank you to the first responders who managed the impacts of the storm last night and all day today. Town Hall experienced some water throughout the building and telephones and email were down for a portion of the day. There was flooding in certain areas including Fletcher Street, Forest Street, and Route 113 in Pepperell near the Town line. There is debris/material in many streets and Highway is still hard at work with clean up.

Special Fall Town Meeting

This fall's special town meeting will need to be called by the Select Board this month (9/28), if it takes place on Monday, November 13. The warrant is planned to include an amendment to the Town Center District Zoning Bylaw and payment of prior year's bills. It also could include the PFAS project at the high school.

Community Compact Grant Program

The state is accepting applications for the Community Compact Best Practices Program. We are eligible to apply and can choose up to two best practices. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. The best practices categories are as follows:

- Age and Dementia Friendly Best Practices
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Best Practices
- Economic Development Best Practices
- Education Best Practices
- Energy and Environment Best Practices
- Financial Management Best Practices
- Housing and Livable Communities Best Practices
- Human Resources Best Practices
- Information Technology Best Practices
- Mental Health Best Practices

Under the Community Compact Program, an IT Grant Program is also available for local investments in technology. The application period is between 9/11/23 and 10/13/23.